

DAILY BULLETIN

FEBRUARY 7, 2005

RICE SAYS U.S. WANTS TO WORK WITH EUROPE, NATO ON ISSUES

Sees opportunities in Iraq, Afghanistan, Iran, Israeli-Palestinian conflict..... 1

RICE, IN TURKEY, SAYS DEMOCRACY'S SPREAD MUST COME FROM WITHIN

Secretary also discusses Russia, Iraq, Middle East, Cyprus during visit 2

U.S. OFFICIAL PREVIEWS GLOBAL EARTH OBSERVATION MEETING

Tsunami warning system will figure prominently 3

CHINA'S WTO COMPLIANCE "UNEVEN," STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL SAYS

Progress evident in 2004 performance, but substantial agenda remains 4

RICE SAYS U.S. WANTS TO WORK WITH EUROPE, NATO ON ISSUES

Sees opportunities in Iraq, Afghanistan, Iran, Israeli-Palestinian conflict

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice says the United States seeks to work with European and NATO allies in pursuit of diplomatic opportunities to support reform and democracy.

"[W]e certainly have a lot of work to do together, we and the Europeans, and we've been through a difficult time, there's no doubt," Rice said in an interview with ZDF German television in Berlin February 4.

"But now we see a whole range of opportunities before us, opportunities that diplomacy can help us achieve," she added.

Despite differences over the war against terror during the past several years, Rice said the aspirations for democracy by the Iraqi and Afghan peoples and the opportunity for settling the Israeli-Palestinian conflict deserve the support of the international community.

The secretary praised the German government for helping to train Iraqi police in the United Arab Emirates. Rice added that she was heartened to hear Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder talking about other ways that Germany could do more to bolster Iraqi security.

The German government and leaders are thinking in "very creative and innovative ways about how to help the Iraqi people," Rice said.

Regarding the role of NATO in dealing with diplomatic challenges, the secretary said the alliance is in transition, as evidenced by its peacekeeping mission in Afghanistan and its training mission for Iraq.

“[T]hat again is why I am here in Europe to discuss and have dialogue about how we take this great alliance ... and move forward,” Rice said.

As for dealing with the Iranian nuclear issue, Rice said the United States and Europe are sending “a very united message” that no one wants to see Iran use the cover of civilian nuclear programs to build a nuclear weapon.”

[T]here are many steps ahead of us and we need to realize that the agenda is a diplomatic one concerning Iran, at this point,” Rice said.

On the issue of global warming and the Kyoto Protocol, Rice said the Kyoto Protocol would hurt the U.S. economy, but the U.S. government believes that “there are numerous other ways that the problems of greenhouse gases and climate change can be addressed.”

The Kyoto Protocol is an amendment to the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change. Countries that ratify this protocol commit to reduce their emissions of carbon dioxide and five other greenhouse gases, or engage in emissions trading if they maintain or increase emissions of these gases, which have been linked to global warming. It was negotiated in Kyoto, Japan, in December 1997.

RICE, IN TURKEY, SAYS DEMOCRACY’S SPREAD MUST COME FROM WITHIN

Secretary also discusses Russia, Iraq, Middle East, Cyprus during visit

The United States encourages those who seek democratic change in their countries, but is “fully aware that this [change] has to be done from within,” according to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.

In remarks to the press February 6 en route to Ankara, Turkey, Rice noted that the transition to democracy “was done from within in Ukraine; it was done from within in Georgia. Even in places where the overthrow of a dicta-

torship like in Iraq or Afghanistan takes place, it still has to be done from within.”

In response to a reporter’s question on U.S.-Russian relations, Rice said that the two countries have expanded cooperation on security issues such as talks to halt North Korea’s nuclear activities, counter-terrorism efforts, and the Middle East peace process.

Rice acknowledged that the United States has been concerned about some “domestic trends” in Russia, but emphasized continued discussion and dialogue rather than isolation.

The way to promote Russia’s transition to democracy is to have “continued discussion and dialogue with the Russian government about the expectations of the world about Russia in terms of rule of law, support for free press,” she said. Rice also encouraged Russian integration into institutions such as the World Trade Organization that “promote economic liberalization and democratic development.”

After her arrival in Ankara, Rice met with Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul. At a joint press conference with Gul, the secretary recounted that “we did talk about Iraq, and I reiterated the commitment of the United States to a unified Iraq....in which all Iraqis regardless of religious or ethnic background -- Sunnis, Shia, Turkamen, Kurds and other minorities -- are all welcome and respected.”

Rice added that the United States and Turkey were working together on a variety of mutual concerns, including the presence of terrorist organizations “that need to be dealt with.” She reiterated that the United States has listed the Kurdish Separatist group PKK as a terrorist organization.

“Finally,” Rice concluded, “we had an opportunity to talk about our hopes for the broader Middle East....in which democracy flourishes and which there are transparent governments.” She spoke of the “special role that Turkey can play in that initiative.”

While in Turkey, Rice also participated in interviews with two of that country’s television networks.

During an interview with Banu Guven of Turkey’s NTV, Rice said that the United States was disappointed that a United Nations plan to reunite the island of Cyprus was

not adopted and is “looking at means we can use to help ease the isolation of the northern Cypriots.”

In an interview with Metehan Demir of Kanal-D TV, Rice said that Turkey has a very important role to play in helping to create “a different kind of Middle East.”

“Turkey ... is one of America’s strongest partners in the broader Middle East reform, a functioning democracy, Islamic people here who are faithful and devout, but devoted to democracy,” she said.

When asked about Turkey’s decision to prohibit U.S. troops bound for Iraq in early 2003 from using Turkey as a transit point, Rice responded that “friends will sometimes disagree, but when we disagree, we have to do so from a basis that still understands the vital importance of this relationship.” She added that the two nations have been able to support each other in places like Afghanistan, and reaffirmed U.S. support of Turkey’s accession to the European Union.

Turkey is the fourth stop on Rice’s first trip as Secretary of State to eight European countries. Rice is also traveling to Israel and the West Bank.

Before Rice left for Tel Aviv, Israel, she also spoke with CNN’s Andrea Koppel. The secretary said that “there is a lot of work” ahead to achieve peace between Israel and the Palestinians.

“[I]f we use this period well -- the period of reform of Palestinian institutions, reconstruction efforts, reform of the security agencies, the peaceful withdrawal of Israelis from the Gaza and the four West Bank settlements... I’m quite certain that we will be well along the way to the president’s vision of two states living side by side in peace,” she said.

The State Department’s transcripts of Rice’s remarks in Turkey are available at:

Remarks to the press en route Ankara:
<http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2005/41851.htm>

Remarks with Turkish Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul after meeting:
<http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2005/41862.htm>

Interview with Metehan Demir of Turkey’s Kanal-D TV:
<http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2005/41856.htm>

Interview with Banu Guven of Turkey’s NTV:
<http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2005/41855.htm>

Interview with Andrea Koppel of CNN:
<http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2005/41854.htm>

U.S. OFFICIAL PREVIEWS GLOBAL EARTH OBSERVATION MEETING

Tsunami early warning system will figure prominently

Officials from 59 nations and the European Commission are considering a 10-year plan to implement a coordinated and comprehensive global system for observing the Earth. They will meet to discuss the Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS) in Brussels, Belgium, February 16.

GEOSS is envisioned as a globally integrated data system that will enable scientists and policy-makers in mitigating disasters, allocating resources, predicting drought and managing land.

The idea for GEOSS gained momentum at the first Earth Observation Summit in Washington in 2003. Since then, the number of nations and organizations that have joined the effort has almost doubled.

“The reason, I think, that this is happening is everyone understands that the range of benefits from this effort is nearly as vast as the planet itself,” said Brigadier General Jack J. Kelly Jr., deputy under secretary of commerce for oceans, speaking at a Washington briefing February 4.

Kelly said the Indian Ocean tsunami underscored the importance of an international campaign to collect, maintain and share data about Earth’s systems. “[I]f we would have had a system like this in place, might we have been able to reduce the loss of lives from that tragedy?” he asked.

GEOSS will be an important mechanism to put a tsunami warning system in place for the Indian Ocean, an initiative that has gained increasing attention since the December 2004 tsunami.

How much a global data system will cost and how those costs will be shared are matters on the agenda for the Brussels meeting, Kelly said. Venturing an estimate, however, he said the cost will range in the tens of millions of dollars, an amount he compared to the astronomical losses caused by the earthquake and tsunami.

“The numbers to [create the system] pale in comparison to the numbers of lives that were lost,” he said.

The greatest remaining challenges to establishing GEOSS are sociological and political, Kelly said. Politicians must muster the will to make the commitments to a system that their scientists recommend; and scientists of differing specialties must learn to work together and recognize the value and validity of all disciplines.

CHINA’S WTO COMPLIANCE “UNEVEN,” STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL SAYS

Progress evident in 2004 performance, but substantial agenda remains

Three years after its accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO), China has made considerable progress in meeting commitments to liberalize its trade, distribution, and investment practices, but the overall record remains uneven, according to Shaun Donnelly, deputy assistant secretary of state for economic and business affairs.

Donnelly assessed China’s compliance with commitments made in its December 11, 2001, WTO accession agreement in testimony he delivered February 3 before the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission (USCC). The commission sponsored a two-day hearing February 3 and 4 on “China and the WTO: Assessing and Enforcing Compliance.”

“Overall, since December 2001, there is much to be pleased with, and, in general, China’s leadership has made an effort to bring China into formal compliance with its WTO commitments,” Donnelly told the commission.

China deserves to be recognized for implementing extensive tariff reductions, legal changes, and regulatory reform and harmonization, he said.

However, he cautioned, “This general assessment notwithstanding, it must be acknowledged that China’s compliance record has been uneven over the past three years.”

Some concerns that arose in 2003 about enforcement of intellectual property rights, discriminatory use of value-added taxes, and barriers to trade in agriculture and services diminished in 2004, Donnelly noted.

“We were able to resolve a number of outstanding issues...using the highly effective mechanism of the elevated Joint Commission on Commerce and Trade (JCCT),” he said.

The JCCT is a government-to-government consultative mechanism that provides a forum for resolving trade concerns. Previously led by the U.S. secretary of commerce and the Chinese commerce minister, the status of the JCCT was elevated following the December 2003 meeting of President Bush and Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao to focus higher-level attention on outstanding trade disputes. In 2004, it was chaired by then-U.S. Secretary of Commerce Donald Evans, U.S. Trade Representative Robert Zoellick, and Chinese Vice Premier Wu Yi.

According to Donnelly, progress was made in 2004, but serious problems remain and new problems have emerged.

“Although China’s performance in 2004 showed marked improvement over its performance in 2003, there remains a substantial agenda of trade issues. Most notably, inadequate protection of intellectual property rights (IPR) remains our most serious bilateral economic concern,” he said.

On the positive side, Donnelly said, China has taken steps to bring its legal system into compliance with the WTO’s Agreement on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS), creating a multi-agency task force headed by Vice Premier Wu Yi. In addition, he said, China’s top court recently decided to allow greater use of criminal rather than administrative statutes against IPR violators.

However, these increased efforts have not led to a cor-

responding reduction in piracy and counterfeiting rates, Donnelly said. "Simply put, we must see substantial improvement in 2005, and the State Department will work with the new IP [Intellectual Property] Negotiator as well as the IP Policy Coordinator, both created by Congress in 2005 budget legislation, to ensure that China makes progress on this vital front."

Transparency in customs valuation, regulation, and proposed legal changes has been another area of concern, Donnelly said.

Significant issues are frequently resolved bilaterally, Donnelly said, due to continuous intense, high-level collaboration between U.S. and Chinese officials.

"U.S.-China economic and commercial relations...are central to our overall relationship, and to U.S. interests," he said. "I remain confident that China's leadership is dedicated to fulfilling its WTO obligations, despite inevitable problems that occur."

Pleases Note: Most texts and transcript mentioned in the U.S. Mission Daily Bulletin are available via our homepage: www.usmission.ch

Select "Washington File" from the top menu bar.

